On Monday, August 21, Amy and I attended a concert at Red Rocks Park, an outside theater. It was raining when we left our house, so we brought an umbrella with us, as Amy had recently been to a concert in the rain at Red Rocks and others had brought umbrellas in. As we entered the park, we were asked to leave our umbrella at the gate, even though other spectators were openly carrying umbrellas in. We were discussing the situation with an employee of Red Rocks when a female officer who we had not previously seen approached us, and grabbed me by the arm, stating, "we will talk about this downstairs (the holding cell location) or you'll go to jail." At this point Amy tossed the umbrella over the siderail, as the umbrella was not worth the hassle and harassment we were receiving.

The female officer then handcuffed Amy, literally lifting her off her feet while doing so. At one point, I believed Amy was resisting and asked her to cooperate. Her response was that she was trying - the female officer had her arm back as far as it was able to go and was twisting and lifting her so much and with so much unnecessary roughness that it was impossible for Amy to cooperate. Amy was then brought to the holding cell, and along the way the female officer commented, "she could kick her little lesbian ass." Amy was charged with disturbing the peace and throwing a missile - not for resisting arrest. While in the holding cell the female officer searched her - her pockets and between her legs only - a much different and more humiliating search then took place at the city jail. While in the holding cell, the female officer kept her handcuffed - even though another officer said that is common procedure only when it is believed a prisoner will harm themselves. During this time Amy was subject to degrading comments, such as, "your girlfriend is outside waiting for you - she's going to have a long wait tonight." When asked about using a restroom the reply was, "piss on the floor, piss in your pants for all I care." When Amy asked about having the handcuffs loosened - just the left one - and stating she works with her hands (a physical therapist), the response was "I bet you do honey." Amy then called out to me to see about having the handcuffs loosened. I asked another officer, as the female officer would not acknowledge me. A male officer then asked Amy if she would like an EMT to examine her wrist. A female EMT stated "I'm not going to touch her," after the female officer whispered something to her - which Amy believes was something along the lines of "she's gay."

During this time, I was not aware this was happening and was told the best thing for me would be to go to the city jail, where Amy would be transported, and start the bond posting process. Luckily, I opted to wait until Amy left, as that process cannot be started until after the person is booked - something I am sure the officer knew. Amy later commented she was glad I had not left, as she truly believed the female officer would have caused her even more physical harm if she had been alone with her. The female officer also literally got "into my face" and told me I had to leave the immediate area of the holding cell - although I had spoken to at least two other officers from that spot. Never at any point was Amy read her rights or told what was happening.

This was a very humiliating and degrading experience for Amy. I could not believe how either one of us was treated by the female officer - over an umbrella. We both had physical marks of unnecessary roughness on our bodies - bruises and scrapes - Amy's through a thick "Champion" sweatshirt. After hearing how Amy was treated by and spoken to by the female officer we attribute her actions to discrimination - based on her assumption we were lesbians. It is extremely difficult for Amy to even discuss this situation, and is doing it only so others may not have to be subject to the open hate and discrimination she was.

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I was employed by the Denver branch of a wholesale distributor of pipe, valves, and fittings for eleven and a half years. During the time I worked there, the company went through several changes of ownership and the Denver branch through four different managers. During the tenure of the third manager, a young man was hired who displayed a fondness for graffiti, which he spread liberally throughout the warehouse and the men's restroom. His most prominent work, however, was left for the brick façade of the building on which he spray painted the words, "PAUL IS FAG" (sic); the building had to be sandblasted to obliterate the vandalism. Shortly thereafter he was dismissed, though his "writings" were not cited as the cause of termination.

About a year later, the branch manager accepted a transfer to Houston, and was replaced by a Christian fundamentalist from the branch in Farmington, NM. On more than one occasion, the new manager made it a point to tell a lesbian co-worker and me that he had "no problem" with the fact that we are gay. Within a few months, however, the graffiti artist was back on the job. A few months after that, the lesbian co-worker and I began to receive written notices that our jobs would be eliminated if the Denver branch did not show improved profitability; no such notices were distributed to other co-workers. In January of 1991, we were called into the office of the branch manager and given our final checks.